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STAPELDON

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8. Titchfield Terrace
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Dec. 18. 1893.

Dear Sir I pray accept my thanks
for your kind reply to my letter,
& by this post I am sending off
a copy of "Stapeldon" & trust
that it may win the approval
of your judgment & taste.
The comic part, & that was
considered comic in those days
was of the rough order, & also

the episode of Blanchfleur was
introduced as contrast
to the Tragedy to which they
lead up. I am told by author-
ities on the Devonshire dialect
that it is given very correctly
& naturally in Act IV. Scene IV.

I am Dear Sir

Yours very faithfully
J. W. Pyke-Cott.

STAPELDON.



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STAPELDON:

A TRAGEDY.



BY THE AUTHOR OF

“ÆONIAL,” &c.

J. N. Pyke-Nor



JAMES PARKER AND CO.

27 BROAD-STREET, OXFORD ;

AND 6 SOUTHAMPTON-STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

1892.

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TO THE RECTOR, FELLOWS, AND MEMBERS,
PAST AND PRESENT, OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD,
AND TO ALL THE GOOD FOLK OF DEVON,
THE AUTHOR OF 'ÆONIAL' AND 'THE WHITE AFRICANS,'
A DEVONSHIRE AND EXETER COLLEGE MAN,
DEDICATES THIS TRAGEDY OF
THE FOUNDER OF THE COLLEGE,
WHO WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST OF ALL DEVON'S SONS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Bishop Stapeldon, Walter, Bishop of Exeter (from 1307), Lord High Treasurer of England (for the 2nd time from 1324), Founder in 1314 of Exeter College, Oxford, then called Stapeldon Hall, a munificent Benefactor to Exeter Cathedral and the poor, and Founder of Schools in Exeter and Ashburton; Founder also (in 1319) of the first London Exchange, called 'Exeter Change.' He was sent on an embassy to France in charge of Prince Edward, and returned Dec. 1, 1325, when the play opens.

The King, Edward II.

Joan Kaignes, Sister of Bishop Stapeldon and Widow of Thomas K. of Winkleigh Kaignes, or Keynes, Co. Devon.

John Kaignes, her young Son.

Sir Richard Stapeldon, one of the Judges of the King's Bench and Founder of some Scholarships at Oxford; Brother of the Bishop, and son and heir of Sir William (and Mabilla his wife), whom he succeeded as owner of Annery, Stapeldon, &c., Co. Devon.

The Mayor of London. The title 'Lord' Mayor was given in the next reign.

Blanchfleur, His Daughter.

Lord Spencer (commonly now so called), the King's Favourite, Hugh Lord le Despencer, Junior, son of Hugh created Earl of Winchester.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Walter Reynolds, once Tutor to the King.

The Earl of Leicester, Cousin to the King and Brother and Heir of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, &c., who was executed at Pontefract 1322.

The Bishop of Hereford, Adam de Orleton.

Baldock The Chancellor, Robert, Archdeacon of Middlesex.

Geoffrey de Lucie, of Lucyshays, and Kingsnympton, Co.
Devon.

William Waulle, Cousin and one of the Esquires of Bishop
Stapeldon.

John Padyngton, Bishop Stapeldon's Steward.

Gournay, Thomas, Knight.

John Marshall, }
H. Moordon, } Citizens of London.

Ladies, Nobles, Clergy, Nuns, Students, Citizens, Performers,
Messengers, &c., &c.

STAPELDON.

ACT I. SCENE I.

LONDON.—*A Room in the Tower, The King and Bishop Stapeldon.*

The King [*holding a letter*]. You're satisfied, sure,
quite sure, as to this

To King Charles? [*hands the letter to the Bishop*].

Bishop Stapeldon. Courtesy, my Liege, is blent
With firmness here.

The King. And so the worry ends.

Bp. Sta. The Queen may set at nought these
mandates, Sire; [*he touches 2 letters*]
She may refuse to come, or come in arms.

The King. Must I do more? Have I not done
enough,
Perchance too much?

Bp. Sta. O King, the Barons' hearts
Are like closed furnace-fires, and if the Queen

Come ringed with French spears, hordes will drift
to her,

As to the French Prince in King John's ill days ;
Troops should be raised, forts manned, ships built,
and wrongs

Righted.

The King. Ah, Treasurer, if you strike one
wrong

It yells, and draws the whole pack : then, forts,
troops,

And ships mean treasure spent, that might be spent
So pleasantly.

Lord Spencer [*opening the door and calling*] Ned !
[*enters dressed as a Strolling Minstrel ; then on
seeing Bp. Stapeldon*]

Welcome back, Lord Bishop.

Bp. Sta. Accept due thanks, my Lord.

Ld. Sp. The land of frogs
Proved for your Lordship, so I understand,
Somewhat too hot.

Bp. Sta. A fire is burning there
That soon may leap across, find fuel here,
And scorch the realm.

The King. The Treasurer thinks troops, ships —

Ld. Sp. [*interrupting*] A bribe to France would
serve at half the cost.

Bp. Sta. That Nation's life is brief whose arms are
bribes :

And though you bribe France, can you bribe the
Queen?

'Tis there the danger's roots lie.

The King [*nervously*].

True, yes, true ;

We will consult on this another time ;

And [*as the Bishop rises to retire*] once again we say,
good Treasurer,

We thank you for your faithful embassy. [*Exit*
Bp. Stapeldon.]

Ld. Sp. Could we not do without him now?

The King.

He's able,

Staunch, fearless.

Ld. Sp. If he's all that, do you relish

His grudging us the gold we need for sport?

But now I want to ask you one small thing ;

A tag of land, Ned, like a lance's point,

Still stabs my Barony.

The King.

Elizabeth's?

Ld. Sp. No! nor yet Margaret's! Don't look so
scared:

I've had, I fancy, all the land I want

From those two.

The King.

Don't speak thus ; do recollect

They and your wife are sisters, and my nieces ;

And one of them poor murdered Gaveston's widow.

Ld. Sp. Gaveston has all he needs ; and what
they lost

Hopped merely, so to speak, from bough to bough

Of Gloucester's potent stem.

The King. "Hopped," say you? "Hopped
From bough to bough!" Nay, nay, the boughs them-
selves

Were wrenched down, well-nigh snapt, whilst our
hands, ours,

Ripped off large shoots! It all swirls back on me;

My nieces' tears, their husbands' rage, the rising,

Our powerlessness; and, then thy banishment!

And then war—slaughter on the battlefield,

And slaughterings on the gallows and the block.

Ld. Sp. Those Barons would have fought for
aught, or naught—

They're well cowed now.

The King. Not cowed, I fear; not cowed,
But watching ambushed, as the Treasurer thinks,
For vengeance.

Ld. Sp. Drop that Treasurer, please; that
strip

Is neither Margaret's, nor Elizabeth's,

I've told you that; so all this talk seems aimless—

The King. Whose is it then?

Ld. Sp. 'Tis Crownland.

The King. Hugh, 'tis yours!

Ld. Sp. Thanks, many thanks; and you shall
have your guerdon,

A bran-new tip-top Strolling-Minstrel's lay.

Hark! [*twangs his harp.*]

The King. Wait ; we'll have an audience : [*calling*]

Ho, without ! [*enter Attendant*]

Make a wide cast, quick, sweep in all you find,

Big and small, male and female, hurry, run !

[*Exit Attendant in haste, and enter confusedly Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen in Court Dress, with guards, grooms, scullions, and female servants, in all sorts of queer garb ; the King waves his hand and they shuffle in together.*]

Ld. Sp. [*strikes his harp and*] *sings.*

It was a bold, but captured, Knight !—

He gazed adown a turret's height

With eyes by famine bleared ;

While in the castle-yard below

Flitted a damsel to and fro,

And chattered, laughed, and leered.

As weary-worn his glances strayed,

They lit and lingered on the maid

A moment ; then a cry

In anguish shrilled ;—for upwards shot

Boy Cupid's shaft plunged swift and hot

As lightning through his eye.

He writhed, he bellowed ; “ Choke that din,”

The Jailor-carle bawled, bursting in ;

“ Love-pangs,” the Knight made moan ;

“Look!” Down he looked ; grew purple-faced,
And spluttered, “Murder, eyes, and taste !
That’s, oh, oh, Frogmouth Joan !”

The Captive reeled as if death-spent ;
But rallied, forwards leapt, and hent
That scoffer by the throat ;
The scant breath mirth had left him wonned,
The Victor straight peeled off and donned
His hozen, hat, and coat,

And sprang downstairs : a barb stood nigh ;
The page who held it screamed, “Hi ! Hi !
Joan, Jailor, catch his head ;
Something’s forgot !” Full-tilt they run,
The man for life, the maid for fun,
And off the youngster sped.

The King [enthusiastically]. Isn’t it good ?

The Audience. Rare ! Splendid !

The King [waving them to stop]. That’s enough—
[with fresh excitement] Exquisite !—Cheer ;—Why
don’t you cheer ?

The Aud. Hurrah !

Hurrah ! [*Gournay louder than the rest*] Hurrah !

The King. Stop—Hush !—[to *Ld. Sp.*] Go on,
go on !

Ld. Sp. "My Venus!" cooed the Knight; Oh, Luck!

He caught her, and with one quick chuck

Horsed her; and vaulting clear

Dropped into selle, and plied his heel;

The steed, while Joan let fly a squeal,

Fled swift as hunted deer.

Foes chased, he raced; ere caught, reached Court,
And clasped the Monarch's feet; "Here's sport;"

The King cried; "Why this guise?"

But when he heard how all nicked in,

That Valour, as is fit, should win

Love's prize, and viewed that prize;

His Royal bulk began to rock,

Then shook with such a mirth-quake-shock,

The Lords turned green and blue.

Now all had happed at wild-fire-pace,

And when the Knight close-scanned Joan's face,

"Odzooks," he growled, and, "Ugh!"

"Ugh?" gasped the King; "You'll wed her
though,

And sharp's the word; or back you go!

So choose you either jape!"

Marriage he chose:—They had an Heir,

The Ma's facsimile,—See, there [*Pointing at Gour-
nay*]

The Frogmouth wide agape!—

[*Great merriment of the King and the Audience.*]

Gournay [*in a fury stepping towards Ld. Sp.*].

You——

The King [*in alarm*]. Seize him, hold him !

[*2 Bystanders secure him*]

Gournay [*turning to the King*]. He has ——

The King. Out with him !—

Should the King's Comrade stint his mirthful jests ?

Various cries of the Audience. Whips, cudgels,
rack, rope !—

The King. Fling him from my sight ;

And never let me see his face again.

SCENE II.

Guest-room in the Mayor's House : The Mayor, and his daughter, Blanchfleur, and many guests ; enter Bishop Stapeldon.

The Mayor [*greeting him*]. Welcome, my Lord ;
tongue, hand, and heart give greeting.

Bp. Sta. My heart meets yours as hands meet,
not, I trust,

To part as these do.

[*Others enter, amongst them Moordon, and while the Mayor greets them, Blanchfleur glides up to the Bishop.*]

Blanchfleur. Welcome back from France,

And from the Queen ;—I doated on her once :
But now I——Is she still as fair as ever ?

Bp. Sta. In face and form more grandly beautiful :
Yet her eyes gleam like——but you never saw
A wolf's—our late King stamped the breed out
here ;

In France I've seen them.

Blanch. And in fancy's glass
I see them ; as I've seen the Fenris wolf's,
Seen the hate's hunger in them, till the chain
Broke, or slipped off, and left him free for ravin.

[*Shuddering*] The Queen may so be loosed [*with
sudden change*] I love those myths.

Bp. Sta. Though trebly ours, they're swamped by
Arthur's tales,
And suchlike, now : yet none through all the
range

Of all man's myths is more sublime than this,
That at the sounding of the golden horn
The Hero-Gods would gather and go forth
In haste, without disorder, fearlessly,
To their last battle with destruction's powers,
Giants and Monsters and the Fiends of fire ;
Knowing the certain issue, death ; yet knowing
A purer, happier world would spring to birth,
If they with steadfast valour hewed Ill's might.

[*half aside*] 'Twas thus the true God-Hero won His
crown.

The Earl of Leicester [coming up to Blanchfleur].

Fair day, sweet Lady, whom all fair things here
Encircle with accordant charm, and take,
As do the petals of a perfect flower,
New beauty from the centre's loveliness.

[turning and greeting the Bishop] Ah, well met ; may
we with our Hostess' leave
Confer on State affairs ?

Bp. Sta. [to Blanch.] The State's poor thralls
Must ever waive their pleasure for her service.

Ld. Leic. [as they walk away]. Let us speak
frankly ; you, I know, love right ;
Could others yet be won to will it, England
Might breathe hope ——

*[They retire to a recess in sight of but out of hearing
of the Audience]*

Blanch. [aside, looking after them]. Queen's Son,
Cousin of our King,
My Father deems your presence pure delight :
I would he kept you to himself !

*[The young men and some Ladies gather round
Blanchfleur].*

1st Lady [to William Waulle]. Your lives
Were in some peril in France ?

Wm. Waulle. The Bishop's was.

Blanch. How ?

Wm. Waulle. When he first reached Paris with
the Prince,

King Charles was like his lily-flower, smooth-soft :
But when our Queen had put forth all her lures,
And found the Bishop took them as a mirror
Takes, and flings off, the forms of flying birds,
France, changing to her old true sign, waxed chill,
And harsh-voiced ; then the exiled Lords 'gan plot ;
And one night, as he came from Court, a dagger
Plunged on his chest.

Blanch. [*with suppressed horror*]. Stabbed deep ?

Wm. Waulle. No, snapt, thank God !

For underneath his robes were good steel rings.

1st Lady. How looks Queen Isabel ?

Wm. Waulle. Like Queen Guinevere.

2nd Lady. In more respects than beauty ?

Moordon. Oh, that's good !

de Lucie. But here we have a match for Lanvall's
Bride,

Whose brilliance forced all Arthur's Court, Knights,
King,

And Lancelot's Self, to own that Lanvall's words,
The words for which he lay death-doomed, were
truth ;

For all the Queen's charm seemed sheer homeliness
Beside his Fay.

Wm. Waulle. Good, that !

1st Lady. French Marie's lay ?

de Lucie. Marie's, who called our England home,
and sang

For Salisbury's Earl Fair Rosamond's kinglike son.

Blanch. In her France gave our England one
good gift.

2nd Lady. To speak of gifts, think what that Fairy
gave

Her lucky spouse ; a purse that filled itself !

That after all was Fascination's crown !

de Lucie. Oh, no !

2nd Lady. Oh, yes !

Wm. Waulle. No Fairy, Mermaid, Nix,
Or Melusine for me.

Blanch. Most men would like
Idun's companions in the Giant's hold.

de Lucie. Why they were hollow, and they had no
hearts.

2nd Lady. And had no tempers, that might com-
pensate.

Blanch. They had smiles always, grace, and help-
fulness :

Gladly I'd be like those fair women-casts.

Wm. Waulle. You ?

de Lucie. Don't wish that !

2nd Lady. For all these male lives here
Exist but on the hope that you've a heart !

Blanch. [*to de Lucie*]. A song ! Quick, quick.

de Lucie. In presence of the Muse
Earth's minstrels wait with hushed expectancy.

All. Well said ! [*to Blanch.*] Do sing to us.

Blanch.

Yes, if you wish.

[*Bishop Stapeldon, the Earl of Leicester, and others
come forward to listen.*]

Woe for the fond Shadow's love for the Sun !

To the fringe of his raiment of light

Swiftly she hied ;

And awhile she lay stilled with the sight,

Stilled with the joy, of his splendour and might ;

Lulled, satisfied.

Ah, but in charmed sight love-charms begun ;

And she yearned to press face unto face,

And to feel, though but once, the embrace

Of the bright, the adorable One ;

Closely, in closely, she wistfully drew.

Then forth from the place of his pride

Careless he looked, and a careless glance threw

Upon her who bent trembling in love at his side ;

And the glory that touched her, slew.

SCENE III.

*The front of old Exeter Change, Citizens standing
about, talking and jesting.*

John Marshall [entering]. What wonder's hope
lives here ? Has King Priest John
Sent a fresh letter ? Is the immortal Jew,

Earth's champion walker, going to pass this way ?
Or have the Sleepers Seven turned sides again ?

1st Citizen. Nothing at that high flight ; the
Treasurer

Just home from French land came here with the
Mayor ;

The Mayor has left, and others ; he's here still.

2nd Cit. He's London's friend.

Citizens.

Ay.

3rd Cit.

When it suits his mood !

Cit. How ?

3rd Cit. Weren't you hatched then, when he
spurned our rights,

Stamped, spat on them ?

Cit.

He ?

Gournay [*half-intoxicated*]. Yes, curse, got the King
To set up, curse it, here the Court of Eyre.

Cries of the Cit. Our Rights !

1st to 2nd Cit. [*pointing to Gournay*]. Who's that ?

2nd Cit. A mongrel fed at Court,

But just whipped off ; so now his carcase swells
With murderous venom like a spider's paunch.

Cries of the Cit. Our Rights !

John Mar. [*aloud*] That Court was Champion of
the poor ;

And paid the oppressors well in fines and stripes.

Cries of the Cit. The Treasurer !

2nd Cit. to 1st Cit.

Were many lashed ?

1st Cit.

Ay: some

Have wriggled to the front again, like Moordon.

2nd Cit. He swunged?

1st Cit.

Ay heartily.

John Mar.

So heartily

He hates the Bishop, London's friend. [*aloud*] Mark well

The Treasurer's gift! [*pointing to the Exchange*].

Gournay [*with a patronising flourish*]. A goodish thought, curse, but ——

de Lucie [*entering*]. Don't but; leave good unbutted.

Gournay [*in a rage*].

Curse you, you —

You Butterfly—I'll—curse—

Cries and countercries of the Mob.

Our Rights!

Hooray!

Hooray! Our Rights!—Hooray! The Treasurer!

[*Swords and Clubs freely flourished, and a general fight imminent.*]

Bp. Sta. [*coming out of the Exchange*]. Wherefore this rioting?

Gournay [*insolently*].

What's that to you?

Are you Mayor, curse it, or your Court of Eyre?

Bp. Sta. The Mayor has left, and all the City's Chiefs;

And I, as servant of the King and God,

Say, 'lower those weapons.' [*All obey except Gournay.*]

Gournay. Your High-mightiness,
Yours, curse it, froths ;with Spencer's, Baldock's,
filth.

2nd Cit. [to Gournay]. Out, carrion !

John Mar. He's no Spencer's sort.

Bp. Sta. [to Gournay]. My office
In Church and State give import to my words,
Sheathe your sword.

Gournay. Curse—[*advances towards the
Bishop flourishing his sword ; the Bp. facing him
steadily is about to speak again*]

Cries of the people, He threatens the Bishop's life !
Sacrilege, smite him ! Sacrilege ! [*they attack him and
beat him down*]

Bp. Sta.] breaking in amongst them]. Hold ! Hold !
[*raises him*]

Let him go free [*Gournay limps off*].

The People. Hooray ! The Treasurer !

John Mar. Friends, among all our civic master-
minds,

Merchants and salesmen trained from youth to
trade,

None saw the needs of Commerce as he saw :

Not one had bounty, talent, energy,

And love of our good City so at heart,

As thus to rear a merchants' Council-Hall,

Palace of Mart, and Wealth's true Treasure-house !

Look at it ! Give the Bishop honour due !

Shouts of the People. Honour, Success, Long Life,
Long Happiness,
To him who gave us Exeter Exchange!
Hooray for him who loves the City well!

ACT II. SCENE I.

LONDON.—*A Street near St. Paul's, the Bishop of Hereford and Gournay in earnest talk under an Archway, people pass in front without noticing them.*

Bishop of Hereford. You'll serve me—good ! You'll have revenge plus wages.

Where's the Archbishop ?

Gournay.

He's at Oxford now ;

The Treasurer too, curse—pardon, my Lord Bishop—He's there too.

Bp. of Heref. Oxford is a craze of his :
And he should never leave it, at least alive,
Were Fate's voice mine ; for had those chattering jays,
The King and King's King, heeded his deep caw,
Our plot, that smiles now, might have grinned with
death-cramp.

But mark ; Although French Charles won't openly
Avow himself his Sister's partisan,
Because of—well, that fancy Lord of hers,
He lets her take her pick of Knights and troops,
And keeps ships handy for her friends to seize
When the time's ripe for crossing ; “when” means
“now ;”

And we, like crossbows charged, await her touch.

[*A Lady and a Dandy Citizen meet just outside the archway, the Bishop of Hereford and Gournay whisper.*]

Dandy Citizen. Ah, this is happiness! How well you look;

So charming! So——

Lady. Just so—So many thanks ;

'Tis happiness to note how world and tongue

Wag with you still.

Dandy Cit. You've heard about the jape

At neighbour Binks' last night?

Lady. Ah, what?

Dandy Cit. Young Guy,

(You know the malapert and all his airs)

Well, he and Mistress Maud had set their plans :

Her stalwart waiting-wench, with help from her,

Should haul him up at dusk ; he came, saw, seized,

And bound the rope tight round him; gave the
sign,

Rose upwards ;—stopped ; and dangled in mid air :

Friend Binks had struck scent, whisked his daughter off,

Put out his line, and when the fish was caught,

Gave it a few quick hauls and made it fast.

Thus, fabliaux say, a Lady once drew up

Her would-be lover, famed Hippocrates,

Half up her tower, and let him swing all night :

But Binks hied downward with a whip in hand,
And our pert pie looks very like an owl.

Lady. Oh, poor young man, unfortunate young
man !

Dandy Cit. And then you've heard—[*a procession
passes*] That's pretty !—

Lady. Ravishing !

Our comely King loves these as we do.

Dandy Cit.

Ah,

You've heard those rumours of the Queen and
France ?

Should they prove true, then farewell winsome
sights ;

And, oh (dear ! dear !) such horrid things there'll be !
Blood ! Wounds ! and he who works it (that man's
brains

Are purely one live knot of wriggling wiles)

Is Hereford's Bishop.

Bp. of Heref. [*angered, to Gournay*]. Stop that
caterwaul.

[*He burst out upon them whirling his sword and
shouting*]

Gournay. Whoor !

Dandy Cit. Run, he's mad !

Lady. (*screaming*).

Oh ! [*They*

both flee at full speed ; Gournay returns to the Bp.]

Bp. of Heref. [*to Gournay*]. Soon we'll scare more
fools,

King, fool, and Court ; but then fright won't be
'Finis.'

Gournay. No, curse them—pardon, my Lord
Bishop, pardon.

Bp. of Heref. Cursing except with candle, bell,
and book

Brings little profit ; or I'd give it scope :
I'd curse the Treasurer's tongue, and brain, and soul,
And other Bishops' cacklings ; " If the realm
Be sick at heart," they prate, " more need for us
To work our own work blamelessly, and pray
For healing : " ' Tush,' say I, ' the head's diseased,
Past cure, past praying for ; we'll slice it off ! '

SCENE II.

*The Front of Stapeldon Hall [now Exeter College],
Oxford, the Rector, Fellows, and Scholars waiting to
receive their Founder : Cheering as the Bishop enters
with his sister, Wm. Waulle, de Lucie, and others.*

The Rector [John de Scvenashe]. Unto our Founder,
to the Venerable
Father in God, Bishop of Exeter,
And Lord High Treasurer of England, We
The Rector and the Fellows, and, with us,
The Scholars of our Hall of Stapeldon,
Give loyal, grateful, joyous welcoming.

Lover of knowledge and of all things good,
Learned and zealous Prelate, Statesman wise,
And brave and leal to country, King, and God,
Receive the homage of thy loving sons.

Bp. Sta. My kind friends, take my heart's acknowledgement ;

'Tis strength and healing to the Statesman's spirit,
For foes are pitiless, and allies themselves
Oft foes, to feel that those he values most
Know he is trusty, even while he feels
They overvalue him, and overpraise.
And on my spirit as sunshine lies the thought,
That, though chill mists of Ignorance cloud our
land

And Factions taint it with their poisonous breath,
Here through twelve years our lamp of Lore has
gleamed.

And light yet grows ; the Royal Almoner,
My well-loved colleague, with the King's accord
Has given to Oxford's crown another gem,
He names it Oriel. For yourselves, dear friends,
Live ye and walk in light, rejoice in light,
The light of knowledge, faith, and loyalty. [*Cheers.*]

[*The Senior Scholar addresses the Founder.*]

Senior Scholar. My Lord, song worthy of thy
praise should greet

Our Patron, could we wake the magic lyre
Of Mantua's Master-Singer of the world ;

Or yet of Him whose soul's flight, to the realms
Of which he sang so sweetly, awesomely,
Fair Florence, thankless once, mourns penitent.
Or could the harp whose rhythmic surge was voice
For Devon's own Bard, our island Bard supreme,
Speak forth our love ; as when its sea-toned chime
Rolled deep as Homer's, and like Homer's called
Troy's hosts once more to life and battle's proof ;
Or when the song-waves boomed with Richard's fame
And England's warriors, Peers of Paladins,
Who fought and conquered for the Hallowed Tomb.
Yet deign to hear our slender canticle.

[*All join in singing the Song of the Founder.*]

1st Verse. Lætâ vocis intonamus
Mentis et concordîâ,
Rite dum concelebramus
Præsulem doctissimum,
Præsidem dignissimum,
A quo nostra sunt primordia !

Chorus. Palmam tundat
Palma rubescens,
Canticum fundat,
Suaviter crescens,
Plena vis oris :
Quisquis es, plaude,
Gaude tu laude
Fundatoris.

2nd Verse. Stent Alfredi prisca sedes
 Munus et Mertonis ;
 Stent Baliolorum ædes ;
 Stet, et eloquentiâ
 Musis et scientiâ
 Præstet, Aula Stapeldonis. [*Chorus.*]

3rd Verse. Animisque danti gratis
 Gratias Deo donamus,
 Tribuit qui nobis, natis,
 Te Patrem, justissime,
 Te, Vir præclarissime,
 Cujus famam vindicamus. [*Chorus.*]

SCENE III.

*A Room in Stapeldon Hall, Bishop Stapeldon and
 Joan Kaignes and her Son, and de Lucie.*

Joan Kaignes [*to de Lucie*]. Our friend de Lupo
 likes himself styled ‘ Wolf.’

de Lucie. I’ll second him, I think.

Joan Kaignes.

How so?

de Lucie.

Translate

My name, as he does his, into crisp Saxon ;

For Norman now sounds French.

Bp. Sta.

Lord Anthony

Won’t care, I fancy, to be Saxonized ;

And, Geoff, had any Seer foretold this thing
To that de Lucie who mid Saxon slain
Took breath by Senlac's old grey appletree,
His meed had been a rope's noose : yet right glad,
Right glad am I, that Normans, Saxons, Danes,
Are merged and fused ; and now the Saxon speech,
Mown down like grass once, or like weeds ploughed
up,

Springs through and o'er the slighter Norman
tongue ;

And both in blended growth shall clothe our land
With crops too rich for other soil than ours,
Save Grecia's haply in her first full strength.

Joan Kaignes. Oh, what are all such forecasts
whilst you fear

For England's very life, and I for yours ?

'Tis whispered, 'tis believed, by those who hope
And those who dread it (thou believest it),
The Queen will come with fury in her soul,
And in her hand as 'twere the sword of France,
To strike at Spencer's heart. He mocks, he thwarts,
Your zeal for right ; and yet his ill fame's spume
Seems splashed on you, and all who serve the King.
Break from his fellowship !—Let him die alone,
As Gaveston perished.

Bp. Sta.

But the King's own life !

My work, I own it, oft seems dreariness,
My power seems powerlessness ; and oft in Devon,

And in these quiet walls, peace seems so sweet :
But should I hide, and in my lurking-place
Hear the French trumpet rasp our English air ?
Now too, when now the King has granted me
Full powers to arm the realm.

Joan Kaignes. Too late, too late.

Bp. Sta. I have launched messages and messengers
To levy troops, and I must wait report ;
And so seek cheer in watching Learning's chase.

Joan Kaignes. Thou canst not raise enough troops
soon enough ;
Draw not the vengeance on thyself ; trust not
The King ; he's wrought-steel now, now molten
ore—

For mine, for Devon's, for the Church's sake,
Perish not with them ; be not Thou as They !

[*Enter William Waulle.*]

Wm. Waulle. The Lord Archbishop asks an inter-
view,
If quite convenient.

Bp. Sta. I am at his service [*Rises to go out*].

Joan Kaignes [*rising*]. Why should he come ? Oh
what should bring him here
To break my pleading ?—Geoffrey be our guide ;
Come Geoff, come John, we'll view the Oxford
sights.

[*Exeunt Joan Kaignes and her Son and de Lucie
with Wm. Waulle.*]

Bp. Sta. [*alone*]. Your fears, my sister, are no
panic-fumes ;

Truly we are as men who walk through mists
On Devon's moors, when any step or turn
May bring them burial suddenly ; my hands,
Now half-untied, are never wholly free ;
Else I would cut sheer, delve deep, drain the bogs,
Feel the firm ground, and see the smile of Heaven.

[*Wm. Waulle ushers in the Archbishop of Canterbury
and exit*].

The Archbishop [*entering slowly and pompously*]. In
name of our most Holy Church, our Mother,
I greet the Bishop of Exeter.

Bp. Sta. I greet
My Lord the Primate.

The Archbp. I had aptly timed
My visit here I found, to take a part,
A small unnoticed part among the crowd,
In a—yes—ah—impressive ceremony.

Bp. Sta. The Hall received me with some warmth.

The Archbp. 'Tis good
To be a Founder.

Bp. Sta. Well, the lists are free,
And, as we know, the Priesthood's needs are great ;
'Twere England's gain too could our Barons' minds
Be trained and broadened like their brawny limbs ;
The people too begin to feel their strength,
And should be taught betimes, and wisely taught.

The Archbp. Can you a Priest, a ruler in the Church,
Brook thought of fresh growths that may vie with her ?

Bp. Sta. "Three pillars prop the Throne," they said of old,
"Those who pray, those who fight, and those who work."

The Archbp. The State with all that appertains thereto
Is but the Church's fief ; for all is hers.
The Church owns all dominion.

Bp. Sta. All is hers ;
Not for dominion, but to serve and bless.

The Archbp. But if she slaves for men, her slaves by right,
They scorn and wound her ; as the King has done,
In Lincoln's person and in Hereford's.

Bp. Sta. The Crosier was with them no staff of peace,
But as a mace to smite with ; Hereford,
Thrust on his see despite the King, sent arms
To help the King's foes ; as to Lincoln's Bishop,
Nevers' great Churchman's claim would suit his taste,
To stand at Mass with boots, spurs, sword on thigh,
And hawk on wrist.

The Archbp. Too true, alas, I fear.

Bp. Sta. He's turbulent, and false, and robs the poor.

The Archbp. Yes, seized their lands, and not to enrich the Church,

But merely to enlarge his park ;—'tis sad !

[*Some of the Stapeldon Hall Scholars outside sing the Chorus of the Founder's Song and pass on.*]

A pleasing break no doubt !—But to return :

The King assailed our rights ; that fact remains ;

But could the Queen win her right place, the Church

Would soon have hers : the Queen would greatly prize

Your support.

Bp. Sta. You know that ? [*The Archbp. starts nervously*] She told me that :

She proffered me high, very high, promotion,

If England's influence conjoint with France

Could compass it.

The Archbp. [*agitated*]. So ?

Bp. Sta. Think you that the Queen

Desires her right place ? None could dream of that,

Who saw her, as I saw, with Mortimer.

The Archbp. Her, doubtful, say, position would but make her

The more submissive : what too of the King ?

Bp. Sta. He's slandered.

The Archbp. May be ; but the Queen's return

Would chase the fereign nightmare ; Charles of
France

Abets his sister : have you weighed his power ?

Bp. Sta. Ay, and from dread of it have striven
sore,

And have at last won warrant from the King
To arm : and now already in hope I see
Our England strong and calm, whilst round her
sweep

Threatenings and thunder-voices of the world
Loud yet as harmless as her own waves' roar.

The Archbp. Could you work that (you're over-
weighted though)

England thus strong would mean an England
proud,

Self-confident, less soft to the Church's touch ;
Better an England weak.

Bp. Sta. [*starting up*]. What Treason's voice
Is this ?

The Archbp. Ah ! Nay, what traitor's heart hast
thou

To our high Mother ! Let a man be false
To country, aught, or all, if true to her.

Bp. Sta. He who is traitor to his Fatherland
Is false to nature, self, and Holy Church,
And unto God who made him Englishman !

[*Enter Wm. Waulle ushering in a Herald and his
two attendants.*]

Herald [*to Bp. Sta.*]. My Lord, I bear a message
from the Court ;

The King's command was, tell it out at once

In any presence, for that all may know ;

'Tis well [*looking at the Archbp.*] that all should know
it, it is this :

King Charles of France for good sufficient cause

Has ordered all his liegemen to renounce,

And banished from his realm, Queen Isabel.

Peril and dread are passed ! Long live the King !

The Archbp. [*in trepidation*]. Banished from

France ! So ! Ah ! I'm pressed for time ;

Adieu, my Lord.

Bp. Sta. [*as the Archbp. shuffles out*]. Farewell, my

Lord Archbishop.

[*The Scholars outside start the Founder's Song.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

WINDSOR CASTLE.—*Rejoicings on account of the news from France : a Miracle Play acted, at the point where Noah addresses his wife, who is chatting with neighbours outside a Tavern ; Joan Kaignes and her little Son, the Mayor of London and his daughter Blanchfleur, Moordon and others, looking on.*

Noah. Heigh, Presto, Dame, toss off your beer,
Yon firmament looks thunderous queer,
And, fegs, you'll find the reckoning dear
If you don't hurry in.

Noah's Wife. Eh ?—Roost up there, eh ?—Leave
the town,
And leave my gossips here to drown,
And good ale to be watered down ?
By St. John 'twould be sin.

[*The 3 sons are meanwhile carrying and dragging various kinds of curious creatures into the Ark with great energy and with comical mishaps.*]

Noah [*caressingly*]. The Ducky Sweetling now will
go ?

Come with its spouse, its—No? Ah! [*as she aims a whack at him*] oh!

(Good lucky, how I dodged that blow!)

[*with tone of authority*] Obey at once, come trudge!

Noah's wife. Lawks!—Cruise away! Out oar, up sail!

Yon trough with never a head nor tail

Just suits no water and no gale;

Be off, your Flood's all Fudge!

[*Noah retires grumbling to the Ark and sends his sons to fetch her in, which they do despite her resistance and wrathful exclamations; she recovers breath, looks round, sniffs and speaks.*]

Noah's Wife. Such smells! Birds; Beasts;—Eh, what's this heap?

[*looking close*] Insects! [*with a scream*] Wah, Yah!

They'll crawl, they'll creep

All over me when I'm asleep;—

[*turning on Noah*] I'll break your every bone!

[*Noah dodges round and the Sons interpose and keep her off.*]

Noah [*dejectedly*]. I'd chop, I would, from dawn to dark,

Till back and sides and all grew stark;—

[*with sudden impulse and preparing to jump out*] Stay rain, hold flood, I'll build an ark

Where she shall float alone!

[*A man who has climbed up a tree behind pours*

down a bucket of water on them ; they scream and tumble inside and the Ark is closed and hauled away. Other shows, dances, &c., follow.]

John Kaignes [to Blanch.]. That's how the Queen,
I 'spect, would serve the King,

If she came back.

Blanch. [catching and kissing him]. You little Elf!

Joan Kaignes. Don't, pray,

Encourage him.

The Mayor of London. The King comes round again.

[Enter the King with Bishop Stapeldon, Lord Spencer, Baldock the Chancellor, Sir Robert Watville, &c.]

The King. Always thus everywhere should earth's sweet face

Laugh with delight : Oh, how my soul hates gloom !
[to Bp. Sta.] What sayest thou, my Treasurer ?

Bp. Sta. My Liege,

I wish and seek man's happiness.

The King. And here,

Here it is ! Look around ; 'tis gladness all.

Who could wish more ? Be joyous in the joy.

I sorely fear those preparation-schemes

Still keep on buzzing in your brain ;—take care,

Don't let them sting.

Ld. Sp.

To round the sports off right,

We should have had a Tregetour.

The King.

Oh, yes!

A Tregetour! He'd give his hand a wave,
And, instant as the act, our Castle Hall
Would be a forest; and anon you'd see
Hounds, steeds, and huntsmen, and a boar at bay:
Again he'd wave his hand, you'd see lists ranged,
Knights charging, plunging horses, splintering spears.
Another handwaft, and the hall's a lake,
With skimming waterfowl and leaping fish,
And then past drooping boughs a boat glides in;
A gallant rows his lady-love, and sings,
And fitfully the Maid takes up the song.
'Tis wonderful; 'tis most delectable!
We'll have a Tregetour, we will, we must;
The best in Christendom; what matters cost?
Lord Treasurer, come, we'll view the other sports.

[*Exeunt the King, Bishop Stapeldon, Lord Spencer, &c.*]

Blanch. And now we'll pass on elsewhere, Father dear.

The Mayor of London. Wait just awhile, Love; let it not be said

We hover round the King's path; we have had
His gracious greeting.

Blanch. Who would care to hear
Or see the King?

The Mayor. Ill words, and fraught with peril;
You seem displeased, and yet you urged me, Blanch.,

To bring you to these Windsor sports.

Moordon [*who has been standing near*]. Dear Friend,

Dear Lady, no one heard them but myself ;

And any little secret, be assured,

Of any Lady, and especially one,

Would find in Moordon's breast an ark secure.

Blanch. An Ark like Noah's that we saw just now ?—

Come, Father ; king or no king, let us go.

SCENE II.

A secluded path in Windsor Park, Bishop Stapeldon and Baldock the Chancellor.

Bp. Sta. The money promised me for armaments
Is drained.

Baldock. No need of such now—

Bp. Sta. Though the Queen
Is driv'n from France, where'er her foot rests, Treason
Will spring and grow ; my orders to raise troops,
Repair and man the forts, and fit out ships,
Must be withdrawn now for the lack of gold.
I've some blunt words for Spencer's ear ; he flouts
His Father's counsels and has hamstrung mine :
And you, who scorn these pastimes, league with him.

Bald. Since Spencer holds the King's moods, one
and all,

As Æolus was said to hold the winds,
My Chancellor-ship (pray note the metaphor)
Founders or floats as Spencer's will decrees ;
So to ensure soft gales my words breathe soft.

Bp. Sta. Those soft breaths harden him to set
loose blasts

That whirl wrath-surges that may overwhelm the King !
Has 'Lancaster' ceased to be a rallying cry ?

Bald. Ah, No !—Oh how they thronged and knelt,
and mouthed

Their parodies of our Church offices,
Before their mob-Saint's picture in St. Paul's,
After we closed the Church at Pontefract !—
His rebel's-mantle falls on 'Wryneck' now.

Bp. Sta. I think of Gaveston and his 'Black
Dog's' fangs

At sound of nicknames : and though Leicester's
thoughts

Dwell still, I fear me, on his Brother's death——

Bald. [*interrupting*]. His Brother earned death.

Bp. Sta. I denied not that ;

Yet if his Judges——But for Leicester's self
Courage is his, and love of truth and right,
And power to hold the disaffected Lords
As still as hooded hawks, or bid them swoop ;
And he is chivalrous, and might be won

By Justice.

Bald. May be—but the point is this,
You want the Treasury refilled ; quite right.

[*Aside*] More chance of pickings, and he shares no
spoil.

[*aloud*] How can we do it ? Put more taxes on ?

Bp. Sta. The people are o'ertaxed already.

Bald. Humph—

[*Moordon crosses behind their backs and hides.*]

I've hit it ;—once you touched those Londoners up
In right good style ; the threat, or just one twist,
Of that same thumbscrew will, I'll prophecy,
Most promptly prompt the City Midases
To let their gold-streams flush your Treasury-pool.

Bp. Sta. The cry of men robbed, outraged, trod to
death,

Gave me no respite till I moved the King
To set the Court of Eyre within the City ;
And I thank God it did its saving work :
But it has maimed my influence for the King ;
Should I repeat it then, and not for ruth
Or righteousness, but bribes ?

Bald. You puzzle me ;
The money must be had, we're both agreed ;
And yet you shrink back here, and boggle there,
As if your conscience always walked with corns :
Leave it to me and Spencer then this time.

Bp. Sta. It shall not be.

Bald. What say you?—‘Shall not be!’
‘Shall not,’ my Lord Dictator? Nay, methinks,
Our influence with the King can swallow yours.

Bp. Sta. I trust not, think it not, that ye in this
Can override me; but, should ye prevail,
I quit state-service.

Bald. You’d resign?—No! no!
We’ll let it drop; the King shan’t hear of it.

[*Whilst speaking they pass on out of sight—Enter
Blanchfleur alone.*]

Blanch. I came in hope to win by some sweet
chance

Some little speech with some one here to-day;
Am foiled, and vexed—I must find peace awhile
From all the turmoil and the rush of tongues
And antic mummeries where the King sucks bliss.
Yet in my brain an old rhyme whirls and wails;
Voice, give it wings, perchance ’twill fly away;

‘Hide the false smile of the Sun, O Cloud;
Robes to the Moth! For the body a Shroud;
Mother, dear Mother!

Guideless was Love’s as a blind bird’s flight;
Joy flits scoffing, Woe’s arms twine tight;

As cold and as tight as a Snake’s coil, Mother!’
Guideless and blindly thus my love has flown:
Yet whither, whither (had I yet the power),
Unto what other goal, would I guide love?
‘What other goal?’ Ah, there whereto it speeds

There is no goal, no bourn, no resting-place!
Joy scoffs and flees, and flings back barbèd shafts ;
And round my throat I feel Woe's chilly arms :—
Yet would I cast them from me, if I could,
To take once more Contentment's dull caress,
E'en though I knew that, like a snake's, their clasp
Would tight'n and strangle me ?

[*Moordon comes forth from his hiding-place.*]

Moordon [*fawningly*]. 'Tis strange we meet
Thus, may I be your escort now ?

Blanch. [*agitated*]. My Father
Is coming ; leave me please ; he's doubtless close,
He'd marvel much to find us here alone.

Moordon [*in his natural assertive tones*]. Dangers
are round you ; drunkards, satyrs, thieves,
Prowl in troops, let me guard you till he comes ;
Then if you wish it, and it must be so,
I can but hide myself : yet wherefore hide ?
My standing in the City is assured ;
And t'ward yourself beneath deep reverence
As flame below heaped incense burns my love.

Blanch. ' Love ' said you ? [*changing*] nay then by
man's manliness
Misuse not this occasion ;—leave me, pray.

Moordon. My Duty to yourself and Sire cries, ' go
not.'

Blanch. I have no fear.

Moordon. But, oh, I fear for Thee ;

And, oh, the pangs of love's fears!—

Blanch. Let me not,
I will not, hear such words.

Moordon. You have lived your life
Mid fluttering fulsome flatterers, till you count
Yourself a Goddess, and a man's heart dirt—
Nay, nay, forgive ; I knew not what I said ;
Let thy wrath pass ; I meant it not ; slay not
My hope that some day you may love me, some day !

Blanch. Woman, if driven at last to hold in scorn
That which she once has loved, may love it still ;
But when scorn first——

Moordon. Thou lovest ! Ah, I know it ;
Thou dar'st love one debarred from thee and love
By man and God !

Blanch. Thou Dastard, oh, thou Dastard !
Some one might wed thee ; such as choose a man
For shape and size, as butchers choose an ox :
Thy fine frame, fine eyes, fine voice, cry, ' Behold,
Admire ! A Lion ! ' And beneath it all
There lurks the small mean curlike thing thy soul !

Moordon. Hell's Devils' yell !—Thou, He, thy Love,
thy Lust,
Shall pay with pang and shriek ; rent flesh, rent
soul !

Blanch. ' Pang and Shriek ! ' Ah, you knew them ;
ah, you knew
' Rent flesh,' ' rent soul,' thou Plunderer of the poor,

When jailors swung the whip-thong ! I love thee ?

[*Moordon maddened with rage rushes at her ; She flees, and he pursues her. Re-enter Bp. Stapeldon and Baldock still talking together.*]

Bp. Sta. Another thing, the Silver-mines in Devon, At Martin's Combe, might well be worked again, In concert with the owners of the soil ; The late King worked them with complete success.

Bald. [*excitedly*]. Is there good ore there, is it workable ?

Bp. Sta. Good ore ; good quality, good quantity. [*a scream heard*] Some one screamed ! Come, there's some one in distress !

Bald. Pray, don't be flustered ; our discourse just now

Is growing quite engrossing ;—that's not much, Some harum-scarum for the moment scared, Has led her pet young man a bit too far ; She'll soon be all 'tee-hees' and smirks again.

Bp. Sta. [*impatiently*]. Come quick.

Bald. Thanks, no knight-errantry for me ; [*Bishop Stapeldon hurries off without another word.*]

Bald. [*looking after him*]. Scud away ; that's it ! [*laughing*] How Episcopal !—

If he resigned, 'twould be unpopular ; In fact, though Spencer underrated the risk, 'Twould I think swamp us, so I stroked him down ; But verily with all those jabberings

Of Justice, Charity, and Armaments,
At times he's almost quite unbearable :
So if he likes to get his pate smashed in,
Now that my Lady Queen is muzzled tight,
' Let him,' say I. [*walks off leisurely in the opposite direction.*]

[*A scene opens out in the distance ; a wild thicket, Blanchfleur overtaken by Moordon stops exhausted.*]

Moordon. Where's your effrontery now ?
Flight has but carried you you know not where ;
Again I say, ' I love you ;' Ay, but now
Love's form is changed ; mine, mine you shall be,
mine ;

I reckon not if the terms be fair or foul !

[*He advances towards her ; she screams again but faces him with her back against a tree ; Bishop Stapeldon rushes in.*]

Bp. Sta. [*to Moordon*] Back, Hound !

[*Moordon draws his sword and attacks him furiously, but is at last struck on the wrist by the Bishop's Staff ; his sword falls, and he turns and flees.*]

Blanch. [*staggering*]. Saved !—Saved ! I bless
Heaven's love—and Thee—

[*She sinks fainting, and as the Bishop hastens towards her and calls aloud, some people come running in.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

LONDON. *A Room in the Tower, The King and Lord Spencer finishing a game of "pitch and toss."*

The King [*delightedly, having won*]. The best, the loveliest game!

Ld. Sp. At least unique,
Or nearly so, through nearly two hours' play,
Not counting Leicester's interlude.

The King [*excitedly*]. What? what?
You've won most? Say you that? You know you haven't!

Play again then: Wait, here's our crooky-back
Who capers on a bench so witchingly.

[*A Hunchback is brought in, and begins to dance; the King takes his seat; many peep in from outside.*]

[*to the peepers*] Troop in!—[*They bustle in.*]

Ld. Sp. [*admiringly*]. Good.

The King. Glorious! I could sit hours, hours,
And never move, or speak a word, but watch
Such genuine sport as this—[*to Ld. Spencer*] Our
game though! [*to the man*] Stop!—

That's enough!—[*throw him gold coins*] Here's your
guerdon—[*to the others*] Skip out all! [*all retire*]
[*to Ld. Sp.*]. Come, Boaster—[*prepares to play again.*]

Ld. Sp. Let's have stakes worth playing for.

The King. That's not a Sportsman's but a Gam-
bler's spirit ;

Yet as you please.

Ld. Sp. I'll risk my best, my Falcon :

Full oft when felled by Ill-luck's lance and bruised
By Famine's hoof good Knights have sold lands,
steed,

Arms ; rather though than have their wristbirds
sold,

They'd starve or hang themselves ; yet matched
with mine

Theirs would have proved to be mere popinjays.

That's my Stake ! Verily 'a bird in hand ;'

Yours may be just half (so the Proverb says)

'The Bird in bush ;' since Treason's simmering pot
Seems just upon the boil again, you stake

The choice, or chance of choice, of forfeit lands.

The King. Hugh!—Will the Lords rise? Must we
have once more

Carnage on battlefields, and if we win,

On block and gibbet?—But we're unarmed ! Hugh,

We cannot win. Oh, how The Treasurer

Sued, strove, for leave to raise, and would have
raised,

Troops, fleets—and now we shall be crushed, crushed, slain !

Ld. Sp. We'll crush the Baronsas at Boroughbridge.

The King. But the Queen's bond and plots with Hainault's Count !

Ld. Sp. 'Hainault!'—For such, Ned, England owns the power

That sphered the Fay, who (so the Trouvere sings)
Roamed through the woods in likeness of a fawn ;
For when the hunter loosed his shaft at her,
It flew back, point reversed, and spiked his thigh.

[*Enter Baldock hurriedly.*]

Ld. Sp. [*to Baldock*]. Why so abrupt ?

The King. Is aught wrong, Chancellor ?

Bald. Leicester——

Ld. Sp. Well, what of him ? We've had him here
With eyes' whites showing and with neck awry,
The ditto of a mule about to kick.
You found him tame ?

Bald. I found and left him wild ;
He angered me with those reforms of his ;
And Hereford's Bishop who was hovering round
Soon as we parted, made his swoop, and trussed
And bore him off ;—and just then news was
brought——

The King [*tremulously*]. What news ? What ?—

Ld. Sp. [*angrily*]. Don't appal the King, he's scared
Enough already.

The King. Oh, what is it? Tell me—
Oh, if we only had the Treasurer here!

Ld. Sp. 'The Treasurer?' Why want him? What good is he?

[*Baldock makes a sign and hands Lord Spencer a paper secretly, he after a glance at it exclaims*]

By Heaven, or Hell, Ned, there's no jesting here.

SCENE II.

EXETER.—*Some of the Clergy, citizens and country folk in front of the West Entrance of the Cathedral.*

A Cathedral Priest. They're cheering, hark! He's come! Pray Heaven State-needs

Won't hurry him away again.

Moordon [disguised, addressing a Countryman from North Devon]. This seems

A biggish muster.

1st Countryman. Zo it be [*turns away and crosses over to 2nd Countryman and says*] D'ee zee

Thic ther gert Lubbercock?

2nd Countryman [stolidly]. Be zhure.

1st Countryman. Thee watch 'en.

Cathedral Priest. [to Moord.] 'Tis a strong hearty gathering; and the Mayor

Has gone to greet the Bishop at the gates

With half the City's hive, and delegates

From towns that owe to him their Schools or fairs ;
And yet the pomp is less, far less, to-day
Than when he entered on his Bishoprick,
For now we've had short notice. Yet his worth
Has year by year won on us ; till we know
We have in him Devon's worthiest, greatest, Son.
So if display's at neap 'tis love's spring-tide.

Moordon. Ah, well.

Cath. Priest. His gifts to our Cathedral too,
Books, vestments, jewels ; and the Canopy !——
You've seen it ?

Moordon. No—

Cath. Priest. Not yet ? You will be charmed !
Then his Sedilia's matchless workmanship ;
And, oh, the throne that seems to toss on high
Slender shafts, foliage, arches, pinnacles,
As if a fountain, with its jets and curves
And glass globes, all at once stopped, and was oak !
And he has gathered to complete the work
Wood, stone, and precious things, at princely cost,
As David did for the House of God of old.

Moordon. [*with concealed sneer*]. Charming !

1st Cit. And then his goodness to the poor.

Cath. Priest. And once through him a miracle was
wrought ;

Orey a Keynsham man, a fuller by trade,
Was suddenly struck blind ; and in a dream
Was given the hope of cure at Crediton,

There, whilst the Bishop read the Holy words,
The blind had sight ; his neighbours, friends and
wife

Proved the facts point by point.

Moordon. They'll make that Bishop
A Saint ! [*aside*] I'd join in making him a Martyr.
[*aloud*] Is the King loved here ?

1st Cit. We are for the King.

2nd Cit. More so than when he made that Gascon
spawn
Our City's Lord Supreme, and Earl of Cornwall.

1st Cit. The King of Romans, King of Germany,
He who was nephew, namesake, and the Peer
Of Lionheart as Leader of Crusade,
He was right Lord for us.

Moordon. There's still a Gaveston.

2nd Cit. He's not at any rate our Lord Supreme.

Moordon. Scorn then of Gaveston led your City to
start
A claimant for the Throne ?

1st Cit. We 'start a Claimant !'—
A Tanner here once dubbed himself 'The King.'

Moordon. Men said, that when, some forty years
ago,
The late King came here with his Queen and Son,
Two babes by botch or treason got misplaced
And when the Court left, Baby Prince was left,
And Baby Tanner taken ! This we know

The late King passed as wise and brave——

2nd Cit.

Hist, Fool,

The man was hanged; and hounds too wild of
tongue

Get hanged! Our Bishop knows the rightful King.

1st Countryman [to 2nd ditto]. Kip yer hoye 'pan
'en.

*Moordon [trying to look unconscious and addressing
Cathedral Priest].* Your Cathedral bounds

Are walled, I see.

2nd Cit.

They'd suit a rising, eh?

Is the Queen coming? Are the Barons up?

Moordon. Ah! How, what? [*Cheering heard near.*]

Cath. Priest [interposing]. Our Cathedral Close
was walled,

When Lechlade, I can just remember it,

Precentor Lechlade, as he came from Mass

Was at that spot [*pointing*] waylaid, and murdered.

[*He hastens off to take his place in the procession.*]

1st Cit.

Murdered!

The Priest of God; oh, cursèd Sacrilege! [*Singing
heard.*]

2nd Cit. Heaven fend the Omen's scath—Here
comes the Bishop!

[*The procession enters; the Choir, singing, then the
Bishop, the Dean [Barth. St. Lawrence], the Clergy
with banners, &c. Some of the Nobility, Lords
Courtenay, de Moels, Columbers, &c.; the heads*

of some of the Devon families, Raleigh, Grenville, Monk, Churchill, Fortescue, de Cirencester, Cruwys, &c., and the Mayors of Exeter, Barnstaple, &c.]

Part of the Hymn heard.

Eden's peace and Eden's beauty
Mirrored, Lord, Thy soul's love-tide ;
Yea Thy life's power moved in oneness,
As the deep calm rivers glide :
All our Being seethes with passions,
Discord shrieks with discord blent ;
Speak Thy peace-word, still the raging,
Let it purl with Love's content.
[*They pass into the Cathedral.*]

SCENE III.

EXETER.—*A room in the Palace, Bishop Stapeldon writing. Enter Wm. Waulle.*

Wm. Waulle. May Padyngton, my Lord, have speech with you ?

Bp. Sta. Yes [*Exit Wm. Waulle—enter John Padyngton*]. Well, good John ?

Padyngton. I've found and bought, my Lord, Some prime heart-oak for your Cathedral work ;
The price is well below my estimate.

Bp. Sta. Well done ! Now can't we buy a little more ?

Pad. Please think, my Lord, what sums you're spending here :—

But may I speak a word on something else,
Something still more important ?

Bp. Sta. [*in pretended surprise*]. Can it be ?
Something still more important than accounts !

Pad. [*offended*]. Your Lordship would I see prefer
a jest.

Bp. Sta. Angry ?

Pad. Forgive the old man's petulance ;
Age makes him silly.

Bp. Sta. [*heartily*]. Nay, who, old or young,
Can match my rare old John ?

Pad. [*deprecatingly*]. My Lord—My Lord—

Bp. Sta. Tell me your thought then.

Pad. I have watched, none knows
How anxiously, the tokens of the times ;
And if the Queen bring war, The Lords will rouse
Like hounds at blast of horn, and chase the King,
Court, Councillors, all, save one ; your treasure
flows

To Devon, in Devon your heart is ;—I must speak,
Would thou wert Bishop only !

Bp. Sta. If the State
Were sound and restful, you should have your wish ;
But by my King's voice God has summoned me
To serve all England : could I then draw back ?
I must to London shortly ; stay you here

And keep good watch on our Cathedral work.

Pad. Stay behind ? Not go with you ? Stay back here ?

No, no ! Please God, I can't stay here, my Lord.

Bp. Sta. Should there be danger ; and Treason's knife, I own,
Though cloaked is clutched ; you would but risk
your life,
Not shelter mine.

Pad. But who would seek or care
To harm a life of such slight worth as mine ?
I should be safe : and yet if otherwise,
And if the doom be set that Thou must die,
O kind dear master, I would die with thee.

Bp. Sta. Would'st thou, my true old Comrade ?
Yea, I know
Thou would'st : God bless thee ; but forbid it thee !

SCENE IV.

EXETER.—*Moordon, still in disguise, is being hooted and mauled ; enter Bishop Stapeldon with attendants and a Priest carrying the Pastoral Staff.*

Bp. Sta. What's this ?

1st Countryman [*from the crowd*]. We'm larnin'
'en be'aviour like ;

'E goed vur zay, "thic Beshop (thac's yer Lerdshup)

Beaint vitty ta be nort bit Devonsheere !”

Us did ought, drat it all, us knaw us did,

Ta've knacked 'is gert squat 'ead off ; bit ther' now

Ye'll 'a' 'en 'anged up praper.

Bp. Sta.

Did he say

I wasn't fit to be a Devonshire man ?

1st Countryman. Naw, naw—'E zaid that yer was
awnly vit

Vur be a Devonsheere man.

Bp. Sta.

No harm in that !

Why what else should I be, or wish to be ? [*applause
from the Bystanders.*]

2nd Countryman. Ay, fathy, 'tes the foindest,
bestest, thing

Thit mortal man cud be : 'tes cruel 'ard

Vur they poor volks 'ot can't be Devonsheere :

Poor toäds !—Naw, us wudn't ave 'e be,

Nat vur warlds, wan o' They !—

Bp. Sta. [*pointing to the Prisoner*]. Then let him
go.

1st Countryman [*deprecatingly*]. 'E aimed us knaw
to be assaultin' like.

Bp. Sta. Well, never mind that.

1st Countryman. Don't 'e, don't 'e now ;

Mascy, don't go vur make us let 'en go ;

Vur, blame 'en, if 'e didn't vleeer and zneer

Agin the King. [*Moordon is in great terror of the
people and lest the Bp. should recognise him.*]

Bp. Sta. Ah !

2nd Countryman. 'E've bin axin' tew,—
Auld Nick knawth 'ot 'e aint bin axin' 'ov—

Bp. Sta. Is he a spy then ?

1st Countryman [*giving Moordon a prog that makes him yell out*]. Thac's the Varmint, zhure !

Bp. Sta. Take him away then ; have him locked up safe ;

But see you don't maltreat him.

Chorus of Bystanders. 'Ees, yes, yes,

'Ees, be zhure, bless yer Lerdshup, fath us wull.

1st Countryman [*coaxingly*]. Bit do 'e now, avore us reep 'en off,

Coome, do 'e gie 'en wan dap acrass 'is 'ead,

[*pointing to Pastoral Staff*] Wi' thic ther crook—jist wan gude solid dap !

[*holds Moordon's head forward temptingly*].

SCENE V.

A Room in the Palace. Bishop Stapeldon and his sister, and representatives of the Cathedral Chapter, and the Prioress with some of the Nuns of Polsloe.

Bp. Sta. [*signing a Paper*]. Thus I confirm the covenant agreed

Between you, Holy Prioress, and the Chapter.
Duty to King and realm has drawn me hence
Too long of late ; but if God grant us peace,
My heart's desire and hope may be fulfilled,
To live here with you all and work with you :
Receive my Benediction each one here. [*They take
cordial leave and retire.*]

Joan Kaignes. Some day, my Walter, all shall own
thy worth

As Devon's heart does ; then may come to pass
That which the Queen foreshadowed ; as her lure.

[*Enter Sir Richard Stapeldon with John Kaignes,
who runs to the Bishop.*]

Oh, while I ponder all the terror past,
My heart's joy beats like quivering wings, or
throats,

Of song-birds, and it sings, " Safe, Walter, safe ! "

[*to her Son*] What was that little ditty Blanchfleur
made

When you kept humming, as a kitten purrs,
From sheer content, when Uncle came back safe ?

[*to her Brothers*] I pressed dear Blanch to come
down here with us ;

She seemed to wish it, yet she seemed to shrink :

Poor Blanch ! Her health and strength and nerves
I fear

Are sadly strained : [*to her Son*] Sing, John, or say
the lines.

John Kaignes. Two little Fairies skipped into a heart ;

One was called 'Music,' the other called 'Joy ;'

'Softly,' Joy whispered, 'how vocal thou art !

When I am gladdest, I'm silent and coy !'

'I cannot live, cannot live, and be dumb,'

Thus carolled Music's voice, 'Let's agree, come,
(Surely we would not each other annoy)

Not song, or silence, then ; just a blithe hum,

Let us like humble-bees cheerily hum ;

You, the heart's owner, too, hum, little Boy !'

Bp. Sta. Bright lines and brightly given. [*Enter*
Wm. Waulle with papers.]

Wm. Waulle. A packet brought
By courier, my Lord [*hands it and retires*].

Bp. Sta. [*opening it*]. From Leicester's Earl ;—
[*after glancing through it*] First cordial greeting,
then the purport thus ;

'Can you assure me that the rights here named
[*showing a Schedule*]

Shall be respected, and the wrongs redressed,
Despite Lord Spencer and the Chancellor ?'

"Despite Lord Spencer and the Chancellor"—

So then they have repelled him finally :

Yet these demands are just :—Ah, would the King
Dared cede me power here !

Sir Richd. Sta. Yours is that Knight's fate,

Who in the Fay's glen saw just past its verge
That which his whole soul yearned for, whilst the
air

Grew hard, impassable, as walls of glass.

Joan Kaignes. Would they but give you peace to
keep with us

That day of your return.

Sir Richd. Sta. We'll keep the day

Together somehow.

Bp. Sta. [to *John Kaignes*]. And be children all
That day, my Johnny.

John Kaignes [delightedly]. Oh ! [gives some skips
and then nestles into the *Bp.*]

Bp. Sta. [caressing him and speaking to his Sister].

Last week I dreamt

Our other three, you, Joan, and Richard and I,
Were playing round dear Father's and Mother's
chairs ;

I saw the massive form and merry eyes,
Whose clear blue-grey beneath the drooping lids
Was never blurred by malice or by hate,
Yet how they lowered or gleamed at thought of
wrong !

I saw our little mother's mobile smile,
The dark hair's floss, and dark eyes full of love,
Love to mankind, and sevenfold love to us.

Joan Kaignes. Would I could see them now !

Bp. Sta. In God's good time

We shall be with them.

Joan Kaignes. May God give you first
Many years, many years, of vigorous life.

Sir Richd. Sta. Yea, for while knowledge grows,
and brain-power grows,
Each year that adds but one to life's account
May multiply life's value twentyfold.

Joan Kaignes [suddenly to the Bp.]. And, oh, that
stabber in France, and that vile Moordon
Would have cut short your life! Is Moordon tracked?

Bp. Sta. No—not yet—But [*with a flash of
thought*—can that be Moordon?

Joan Kaignes. Who?

Bp. Sta. He whom they called a Spy; whilst
looking at him

I felt, 'I've known that man;' and then again
The feeling passed. [*to Sir Richard*] We'll question
him to-night.

Wm. Waulle [entering and handing papers]. From
the King's grace, my Lord; the Bearer's horse
Sank at the gates. [*Exit Wm. Waulle, and John
Kaignes runs out with him.*]

Bp. Sta. So urgent! [*reading the letter*] 'Haste;
the Queen,

And John of Hainault, Brother of the Count,
Draw nobles, knights, troops, ships, to Holland's
coast

To invade the realm; and here the mutinous Lords

Are arming to receive them ! Speed to me ;
Let nothing stay thee ; I command, implore !'

Joan Kaignes [*with a cry*]. Oh, Peace is slain !

Sir Richd. Sta. That bribe to France brought
ruin ;

For ours like spendthrifts' arms were sold for feasts.

Joan Kaignes. They foiled, those two, your zeal
for righteousness ;

Else you had healed the hatreds bred of wrongs.

Bp. Sta. Leicester must have reply first ; then for
London.

Sir Richd. Sta. I go with you :—War gathers
front and rear,

No man so girt can guard himself ; but two
May shield each other fighting back to back.

Bp. Sta. First rouse Devon's strength, then come
to me.

Joan Kaignes [*despairingly*]. The Dread,
All last year's dread, drifts back on us again !
[*wildly*] Do not go !—I beseech thee, do not go !

Bp. Sta. If my King's mandate could be dis-
obeyed,

Yet would my King's appeal be God's command.
Stay thou here, dearest.

Joan Kaignes. Could I wait days, weeks,
To get scant news, and then feel, if the news
Were glad, that that same hour might be death-
fraught ;

And if the Messenger brought grievous news,
To know, that yearn and suffer as I might,
I could not reach your side for days or weeks?
I cannot, cannot, stay.

Bp. Sta. My fear for you
Might numb my arm or brain.

Joan Kaignes. Oh, let me come :
Let me not thus be parted from you, Walter !

Bp. Sta. Will you then promise if I give the word,
Saying, ' It must be so, it must be now,'
That you at once will seek some safe retreat ?

Joan Kaignes. If—yes—if else I may not go—
I promise !

ACT V. SCENE I.

LONDON. — *A Tavern near St. Paul's ; Gournay, Moordon, and a 3rd Conspirator.*

3rd Conspirator. Good luck !

Gournay. Curse, when the storm has chucked
away

Hainault's fleet, Nick himself can scarce tell where,
Unless he has it safely lodged below !

3rd Cons. 'Tis lodged on Orwell's banks : Queen,
Prince and Kent

Are landing now.

Moordon. To work then ! Rouse the City !
Or when luck's sky rains spoil, 'twill leave us dry.

3rd Cons. All 'Wryneck's' vassals are in arms,
they say,

But make no movement, for he gives no sign.

Gournay. By the Pit's fire-jaws, once that Trea-
surer, curse,

Nabbed him almost, when Belial's Son (bless, curse,
him)

Baldock struck in, turned Leicester sour, and I,

You'll find, I think, have settled it.

Moordon [*sneeringly*].—

What, You?—

Your Patron may have ; he, we know, delved hard
To make the ditch 'twixt King and Queen a chasm,
And bridged the gulphs that kept the King's foes
sundered,

And——

Gournay [*breaking in*]. That's all true enough, and
stale enough !

Well, curse it, Wryneck wrote the Treasurer ;
And Hereford nosed it out, that much he did,
Then sought my aid ; so Wryneck's man, being
tracked,

Lost fob, and something that he prized still more ;
In brief (for I'm a man to do, not prate)
In brief, his letter reached the Treasurer
In due course, curse him ; and in like due course
Letter and answer reached my Bishop's hands.

Moordon [*patronizingly*]. Not bad !— [*cheering
heard*]. What's that ?

3rd Cons. [*looking out of the window*]. The Treas-
urer ! How they cheer !

Moordon. You should have heard them bay in
Exeter.

Gournay [*derisively*]. They bit too ! Though your
prison Cerberus

Gulped, curse, your sop (else, curse, you wouldn't be
here)

You couldn't charm the Devon-mastiffs' jaws !
A fool that Bishop was to rescue you.

Moordon. That Bishop was a fool to rescue you
From London's bull-dogs.

Gournay [*in a fury*]. Curse, you Whelp, you Rat,
In Windsor Park he, curse your putrid soul,
If you hadn't turned tail——

3rd Cons. Stop ! We've work to do.

Gournay. Right, curse : We'll kill the King.

3rd Cons. We'll wait for orders.

Moordon. That cheering showed us whom we
ought to kill.

3rd Cons. He may prove dangerous ; more probably
He'll dance the back step t'wards his diocese ;
I should I know, if my allies, like his,
Had cut my claws and almost drawn my teeth.

[*Enter Wm. Waulle, de Lucie, and another ; Moor-*
don conceals himself behind the other conspirators,
and they talk in whispers.]

de Lucie. 'London and Life,' say I.

3rd Loyalist. It may be soon
'London and Death.'

Wm. Waulle. Meanwhile 'Life !' [*calling*] Wine,
good host ! [*wine brought.*]

de Lucie [*to Wm. Waulle*]. Hast seen the 'White
Flower' lately.

Wm. Waulle. Ay, to-day.
The Bishop rode to the Mayor's ; she greeted us ;

Grave she was, yet within seemed fever-fires ;
Her lucent eyes seem more translucent now,
And name and hue now more than ever one.

3rd *Loyalist*. If they'd just put her up as prize, my
lads,

For tournament or fight, I'd try my luck ;
Though doomed to wear, as many a suitor has,
The Lady's under-robe in lieu of mail.

de Lucie. Lovely she is ! By Heaven's own loveliness

Eyes rest upon her awe-chained ; she is perfect !

Wm. Waulle. She's not for us though ; let us have
a song.

3rd *Loyalist*. Roland's, or Richard's, or a 'Mixt
betwixt'

Of Walter Mapes, or [*to de Lucie*] else your own.

de Lucie. So be it.

[*sings*] En Monk ! Enter quantus venter !

Quæris quod his grace is ?

Vinum vidit, labia fidit

Into pleased grimaces.

Chorus [*all rise and join in*]. State, sto ; cantitate pro

Rege, lege, populo !

Yoicks ! Hoicks ! Tilly-vally, Ho ! [*ad libitum*.]

Moordon [*to Gournay*]. Just twist the neck of that
young Chanticleer.

Wm. Waulle. Stand aside then.

[*Moordon retires apace, as do the others, de Lucie and Gournay face each other and fight.*]

Cries of the onlookers. Well struck! — Well guarded! — Home! [*de Lucie is wounded.*]

3rd Cons. Again! [*as de Lucie is again wounded.*]

Moordon. Hurrah! [*to Gournay*] Go in and finish him.

Wm. Waulle. Good stroke! Hurrah! [*as Gournay is gashed on the sword-arm*]

Gournay [*throwing himself against the wall.*]

Curse, mercy, quarter, grace;

I yield me—curse—in Mercy's name—

de Lucie [*lowering his sword*]. Go then!

Gournay slinks out with his companions; de Lucie reels, and is supported by his Friends.]

3rd Loyalist. Speed for a leech.

Wm. Waulle. My God, he's badly hurt.

SCENE II.

INTERIOR OF THE TOWER. *King Edward in great distress and terror.*

The King. Mortimer! Mortimer! Dead Sea!
Death's Sea!

Attendant [*entering*]. The Treasurer, your Highness. [*Enter Bp. Sta. ; exit Attendant.*]

The King.

Oh, thank God,

Thank God thou'rt come. Fleets vomited from Sea,
The sea of death ; troops swarming up the beach,
From Hainault, Holland, France, Bohemia ;
Thousands, hordes, legions ; headed by the Queen,
And mine own Edward, and by Kent ; [*with sudden
rage*] False Friends

Tear thee, false Brother, even as with thee
Mortimer comes to tear my life away.

Bishop, thy counsel was as Heaven's ; and I
Was deaf and dazed ! Speak, in there yet a hope ?

Bp. Sta. Yea, hope : God holds the issues ; we
must act :

Watville has troops ; should strike ; perhaps has
struck.

The King. I foresee—woe, woe—I forefeel it all—
Heaven's flaming firebrand and the dearth and deaths
(How long since was it ? Yet what reck's how long ?)
I knew it, know it, they foretold the King's
Bale, murder ! All is lost, lost : let me die.
No ! not die ! not yet ! Dost not thou fear death ?
Or thinkest thou they will but kill thy King,
And Spencer ? [*Enter Attendant with a Messenger.*]

Messenger [*throwing himself on his knees*]. News
from Essex ; woful news ;

The Country folk, the disaffected Lords,

The Bishops, Ely, Lincoln, Hereford,
And Norfolk's Earl, and Leicester's Earl [*the Bishop
starts*] are sucked
Into the rebel whirlpool [*the King is utterly over-
whelmed*].

Bp. Sta.

Didst thou say

The Earl of Leicester ?

Messenger.

Yea, my Lord ; they hailed

His coming as the presence of Victory.

[*The Bishop is about to speak again when the King
waves the Messenger out.*]

The King. Would I had died when my poor
Brothers died.

'Poor Brothers!' nay, most favoured, oh, most
blessed :

They lived not long enough to love earth's grace,
And sickness loosed so gently their young lives ;
But unto me, O Bishop, death to me
Would be so terrible, so ghastly-grim.

Bp. Sta. Word has gone forth to call more levies out ;
They muster now.

The King.

Act, dally not, call forth

The troops we have, let the new levies follow ;
Did I not front, break, s Craunch this Leicester's
Brother ?

And, ah, those Traitor Bishops ! They shall cower,
As cowered their kith before my Father's wrath !
And those half Frenchmen, yea in heart all French,

Those two half-brothers of mine, are they as kings?
And he, that Orson aping Valentine,
That savage from the wild Welsh marches, he
Shall feel the King's hand's weight—that Mortimer!
[*shudders*]

Bp. Sta. [*moving towards the door*]. I speed to
summon out the troops, to bid
The levies follow, and to send swift scouts,
With news of help, to Watville.

The King [*wavering and stopping him*]. Thou
wilt go?
And be with me?—But oh 'tis all too late!

Bp. Sta. For crown, for life's sake, for the Prince
thy Son
Imperilled in the hands of Mortimer,
Act, rouse, call up thy Father's chivalry,
The spirit of the race of Lionheart.

The King. I cannot, will not, go.

Bp. Sta. [*dejectedly*]. With this undone.
What can be done?

The King [*in a panic*]. I am not safe here; where,
Where can I flee? North, South, and East are barred;
But West?—Ay westwards I may flee;—to Bristol.

Bp. Sta. Trust Exeter; she won, she keeps, her name
“Fidelis semper.”

The King. Larger, wealthier,
Nearer, is Bristol; I shall there find rest.
Or if, if (God forefend!) they chase me thence,

The near Welsh hills or Ireland's coast shall give
A sanctuary.

Bp. Sta. May God's arm shield my King!

The King. They will pursue, o'ertake, seize, murder
me,

By gash of knife, or poison's spasm, or Fire!

Oh with what agonies of fire they writhed

And died, in France, the Temple's Knights! and
here

Their Torturer's Daughter comes, with heart like
his!

Bishop, I've borne flame's pangs; in fever once

Close-pent meseemed within a brazen vault

Hot as a kiln, alone with gadflies, wasps,

Wild-cats and adders; and they buzzed, screamed,
hissed,

And stung and tore my flesh; one mad wild-cat

Whilst with its claws it ripped me, glared at me,

With eyes that were the Queen's! And fierce, more
fierce,

The heat grew; till the walls blazed out; and, then,

They seemed to draw together, inch by inch;

Slowly they closed; my torturers sank charred;

And still the solid fires drew in: they touched,

They clipped me; then brake, then like lightning-
stabs

Shot inwards through me. Oh, all anguish past

Seemed but as torpor to the pangs that leapt,

Plunged, raged, within me ! Now, e'en now, ah,
God !

I feel the fire, the ravening fire !—Save, save me !

Bp. Sta. O my King, I would do, would suffer,
aught,

Could my weak mortal arm avail to save.

The King. Let London's strength stand sheer
before my foes.

Bp. Sta. [*pondering*]. It should be held ; but
who can hold it ?

The King. Thou :

None, none, but thou ; not Spencer, Arundel,

Nor any else ; I name thee Custos, [*writes*] hold it !

Bp. Sta. The Londoners half love, half hate my
name.

The King. Give me, none other can, give me thy
King

Some life-chance ; give one chance, one hope ! Save,
save me !

As Friend, as Sovereign, I command, implore ;

Yea, I adjure thee by thy loyalty

Unto thy King on earth and King in Heaven !

Bp. Sta. My Lord, O King, the voice of thine
appeal

Is as God's fiat ; and I count my life

Not as mine own, but God's fief, thine and God's ;

And I will hold the City with my life.

SCENE III.

The same room in the Tower. Bp. Sta. alone.

Bp. Sta. Now then to ride and claim the city-keys.

[*Enter Joan Kaignes and her little Son.*]

Joan Kaignes. I sought you for I heard the King
had fled.

Bp. Sta. The King has willed to journey to the
West ;

And I am set as Custos for the King :

And now your promise must be kept, dear Joan.

Joan Kaignes. I must not leave you.

Bp. Sta. Dearest, you know well

How I shall miss you, in a thousand ways ;

Yet now it must be, now the time is come ;

The Queen has landed on the Essex coast,

And here lurk traitors.

Joan Kaignes. From our childhood's days,
Walter, we clung together, thou and I :

And ever year by year still more and more

My love and loving pride have twined round thee ;

And should I leave thee when thou needst me
most ?

Bp. Sta. Try me not, dear, so sorely.

Joan Kaignes. Must I leave thee ?

Slink from thee, like that King ?

Bp. Sta. Hush ! Think and speak

With reverence of thy King.

Joan Kaignes. He marred thy plans,
That would have saved his poor unmanly life ;
And now he sets thee here for death ! Doth God
Ask such a life as thine for such as His ?
As his, whose kingly stature, port and mien
Swallow up all his nature's kingliness.

Bp. Sta. O Sister, thou hast grieved me to the
heart

Thus speaking of the King, thus urging me
To rend the oath that binds me.

Joan Kaignes. Hast thou sworn,
Hast thou sworn thus to slay thyself ? What God,
There is no God, would register such word :
[*breaking into indignation*] Ah, wherefore hast thou
sworn ? What right had'st thou
To bind thy soul thus, thus ?—Art thou not ours ?
Our own, our hope, our joy, our glorying ?
[*bursting into tears*] Let me at least be with thee
to the end.

[*pointing to her Son*] He shall go down to Devon ;
let me stay.

John Kaignes. Oh, do not send me from you,
Mother.

Joan Kaignes. Peace ;
You cannot understand this.

John Kaignes. Uncle, please,
Let mother stay, and let me stay with you.

Bp. Sta. It must not be : the thought that your
loved lives
Rocked helplessly with every stroke I struck,
Would maim my hands.

Joan Kaignes. I dare not leave you.

Bp. Sta. Sister,
Thine own soul too is bound, as mine is bound.

Joan Kaignes. Oh, spare me, Walter, Walter !

Bp. Sta. Nought can rend
My promise, or thine own ; the doom is set,
Whate'er it be ; and we must wait God's will !
Intrust thyself, intrust my fate, to God :
Think of me, dearest, ever pray for me ;
It may be we shall meet to give God thanks
In the dear Devon home ;—or we shall meet
With joy at last mid scenes yet lovelier.

[*Saying this he leads her by the hand towards the
door, and she goes forth with her little Son, both
weeping bitterly.*]

SCENE IV.

*Street by North gate of St. Paul's, with view of the
Cathedral ; Citizens passing, buying and selling,
standing and talking, &c. ; Enter a Pardoner
riding.*]

Pardoner [in a squeaky voice]. Oh Yes ! Good
people, all the merchandise

In all your City's vastness cannot match '
This little wallet's freight : look ! Here they are ! '
Here they are [*flourishing Indulgences*]. All sorts !
Dirt-cheap, every one,
That is of course considering value given.
Our poor benighted foresires never saw,
Heard of, or dreamed of, such rich blessings brought
To every man's own door ! Here's meat for Fasts !—
Who that could feast would starve ?

Voices from the crowd. Here, Hi !—Hi ! Here !
[*many buy.*]

Par. Here's one for passing on some ticklish
tale

Imparted under vows of reticence.

Dandy Cit. I'll buy that ! [*receives it and hands
coin.*]

Par. Thanks, fair Sir [*shakes indulgences over
his head*]. Here's every sort !

Whoso buys one of these may soothly say,
'I tower o'er other folk : no rank, wealth, prowess,
Gives such pre-eminence ; in childlike trust
I blot this precept out, or tear up that ;
But let my neighbour, ay, or Baron or Earl,
Presume to do the like (oh pitchforks, claws !)
Old Hornie grabs him !'—'Tis a rapturous thought.

Lady. Rapt'rous !—Good master Pardoner, let me
tower

O'er others thus ! A Licence, please, to wear

My gauds at Church on Fast-days [*holds up money*].

Par. [*aside*] Here's a pinch!

[*aloud*] Where is it? [*fumbles in his bag*] Ah! [*shuts the bag*] Wait just a minute; I'll fetch it.

Rides off hastily whilst shoutings and cheers and yells are heard Eastwards.]

Cit. [*entering*]. Hoots and cheers greet the Custos.

2nd Cit. Custos? Who?

1st Cit. The Treasurer; he rode to claim the keys;

And 'twixt our chiefs and him speech shot like shafts;

They knew his troops were scant, so hugged the keys.

Moordon [*entering*]. Sing 'Jubilate,' that they held 'em tight.

Dandy Cit. I loathe such broils, they wreck all social cheer.

Moordon. The Queen is marching on us now full-speed: [*cries of alarm*]

And could that Treasurer clutch those keys, our town

Would be a trap, and we the rats there caught,

There pent, starved! Are the famine-years forgot?

A famine yet more fell would herald in

All horrors of a City stormed, fire, rape,

Slaughter! And would ye yield yourselves to this,

To this? For one who flees from you? One who—
You know full well what Hereford's Bishop says—
One who has thrust aside your chosen chiefs,
And flings you underneath the heel of him
Who mocked our City's rights with alien Courts!
Forget not that. [*Cries of the people.*]

John Marshall [*to Moordon*]. You won't; those
memories
Were branded into you too deep for that!
The Court wrought justice; and [*to the crowd*] forget
not this;
The Treasurer gave us Exeter Exchange.

Moordon [*to Marshall*]. Out Parasite! [*Cheers
and groans of the crowd.*]

Gournay. He's Spencer's, Baldock's, mate!
Curse.

Cries of the people. Ay!—No!—Ay.

Marshall. False! False!

Moordon. Hark, how they talked
(I heard them) Baldock and that Treasurer, thus;
'We touched the Londoners up in rare style once!
Now for the sport again; a twist or so
Of that same thumbscrew (thumbscrew was the word)
[*wrathful cries*]

Would prompt those Midases, those Ass' ears,
To let their gold streams flush our treasury-pool!
With this they passed on laughing brutally [*furious
yells*].

A Loyalist [*to his neighbour*]. We'll vanish, Friend,
the Queen's side kings it here.

Moordon [*pointing to Marshall*]. Smite down that
Hireling.

[*Marshall is attacked, struck down, and dragged
away.*]

Cries of the Cit.— Down with King and Custos!
Our liberties! Rights!

Moordon. Has it not of yore
This our great City by its sole acclaim
Set Kings o'er England? Shall one Coward's voice
'Gainst London's will, to London's shame and scath,
Enthroned her Ravager as London's Lord?

Cit. Down with the City's haters, King and
Custos!

SCENE V.

A room in the Tower, Bp. Sta. and William Waulle.

Bp. Sta. To leave the City may be perilous;
But, foiled thus, I must have more troops; those
levies
Should now be massed at Kingston; fetch our
steeds,
And bring the shirt of mail I wore in France,

It saved my life once : then we'll hear, good Coz,
The hoof make music while the swift breeze sings
[*Exit Wm. Waulle.*]

Attendant [*entering*]. A scout, my Lord, from
Essex [*enter a man mud splashed, exit Attendant*].

Bp. Sta. Friend, what news?

Scout. The people swarmed, Lord Treasurer, to
the Queen,

Like bees to theirs ; Sir Robert knowing it,
And without hope of reinforcements, faltered ;
And spies from Leicester's Earl stole in and waked
Mem'ries of Lancaster, his early patron ;
Then the Queen flung her bait, a Barony ;
And all his troops are Hers !

Bp. Sta. [*after silent thought*]. They march on
London ?

Scout. Yea, my Lord.

Bp. Sta. Go and have refreshment ; later
I'll hear from thee full details [*exit Scout*]. Watville
then

Is traitor as was Harcla ; as the hound
That when let slip upon the quarry, turns,
Springs at and tears his Master ! Ah, my King,
Had but thine heart been as thy Father's heart !—
What fate awaits us now ?—I thank God's love
That those I love have passed from hence un-
harmed :—

Yet fain would I awhile have watched Lore's boughs

Grow strong, and multiply ; and that fair shoot
I grafted in Oxford ;—will they let it live? [*Enter
Attendant.*]

Attendant. A Lady who withholds her name, my
Lord,
But says your Lordship knows it and herself,
Craves audience on the plea of urgent news.

Bp. Sta. [*pondering*]. Action is urgent ; hindrance
may be loss ;
To lose her words may be loss yet more fatal :
[*to the Attendant*] I'll see her. [*Exit Attendant ; he
returns with a Lady disguised, and retires.*]

Lady, I am pressed, o'erpressed,
By thought and task ; may I, with scanty preface
Yet truest deference, say, I wait your word ?

The Lady [*vehemently*]. Traitors are banded,
sworn, to reave thy life !
But, lest thou doubt my truth — [*throws off her dis-
guise*]

Bp. Sta. [*agitated*]. Thou, Lady ! Thou
Hast plunged to deadliest risk !

Blanchfleur. What reck's the risk ?
Didst not thou stake thy life for me, and save me
From horror fathomless ? I can never pay
That debt in full :—but hear me ; the Queen's gang
Broke on my Father, clamoured, argued, raved,
And at the last swinging their clubs and knives
Menaced both him and his with instant death,

Unless he swore to serve the Queen, and swore
To brand the King's friends as the City's foes :
And he has sworn.

Bp. Sta. Accept my heart's warm thanks ;
I must haste forth and bring in troops.

Blanch. Go not ;
I pray, conjure thee ; or come back no more.

Bp. Sta. Nay, I must hold my post.

Blanch. Then keep the Tower ;
I'll probe their plots, and send or bring thee word
To-morrow.

Bp. Sta. It may be too late to-morrow—
I may be cooped, past power to help the King.

Blanch. The King ! The Culver-heart ! He, thou-
sands such,
Were less ten thousand times than thy life is !
Draw to the Queen, she knows thy worth ; the
Prince
Loves thee ; and those who hate would welcome
thee.

Bp. Sta. Dost thou not feel I could not do this
thing ?

Blanch. Baldock has fled, Lord Spencer too has
fled,
Winchester's Bishop, yea and Arundel's Earl ;
And they, whate'er they are, are not faint hearts ;
But tarrying meant self-slaughter. Yesternight
(And, oh, the vision's terror drove me here,

Else it had driven me mad) in trance I stood
Within a street I knew, I've seen it oft ;
And there, ah God, there lay upon the stones
Thy body, headless ! And around it yelled
Ruffians gore-splashed, and mocked it ; till there
crept

In through their midst a woman wan with fear,
And flung a rag across it suddenly :
They cursed at her, but let the rag remain.
And one voice shouted, ' Get him under ground ; '
Another howled, ' Two Churches cast him out ;
He died accurst : ' and all there screamed, ' Accurst ! '
Then dragged the marred trunk forward, dug a hole,
Down through a rubbish heap, and hurled it in.

With stress of agony I sank as dead ;
And when at last life's light slid glimmering back
The Vision's glare flashed through it ;—'tis no
dream,

No phantasy ! but truth ; Fate's will, Fate's truth,
Unless thou turn ! [*throwing herself on her knees.*]

Turn ! 'Tis not yet too late.

Would'st wreck thy kin ? Would'st break thy Sister's
heart ?

And—(yet what matters that ?) break mine ?

Bp. Sta.

Thine ?

Blanch.

Death

Puts forth his hands, earth's fashion, man's behests,
Yea all the bands of maiden-terrors, snap,

As cords in flame.

Bp. Sta. Because life's bounds loom near,
And near the spirit-world's realities,
Would'st shake the soul's foundations?

Blanch. Doth thy soul
Stir at my soul's touch ? Doth it answer mine ?
Ah, then I fear not aught !—Nay, nay, I fear
Death now a thousand-fold ; blind, bitter Death,
The Severer ! Bow thy pride (is it not pride ?)
Summon the people, cry, ' Long live the Queen,'
And live thyself. Or if thou wilt not this,
Speed to the home thou lovest, speed to Devon :
Nay, there in Devon, Hate's hounds may track thee
down ;
Haste, flee beyond their quest ; the winged sea-
steed

Shall bear thee safe to some fair far-off land ;
And I—I—(shall I not ?) will steal away——

Bp. Sta. [*startled*]. Ah ! Temptress !

Blanch. [*in quick anger*]. 'Temptress?' Dost
thou brand me such ?

[*changing*] Yea, fling me any name of vileness now ;
I heed it not ;—not much, not very much,
Now, while I yet am with thee. [*Despairingly*] But
hereafter,

When they have wrought their will accurst, and
thou
Art slain, and parted from me evermore,

Thy word, more deadly than the thrust of swords,
Will stab my soul ; yea even unto death.
And in the gulph of terror and despair,
Amid the jeers of Fiends and anguished shrieks,
While all the rearing heads of fiery waves
Hiss ‘Temptress, Temptress,’ I shall hear that
voice

Once dearest to me, once most musical
Of all earth’s music, hear it as it flung
Its last fanged ruining utterance.

Bp. Sta.

Forgive !

Forgive me ! I renounce the word, recall,
Abjure, abhor it : thou hast hazarded life
For my life ; thou didst come to save !

Blanch.

Kind words,

Sweet gracious words, they lift my soul t’wards
hope !

[*with a gasp*] Hope ? Yet what hope ? Earth holds
none — Ere I spake

Hope seemed to be :—But while I spake, it died.
And, dead at heart, within some convent cell,
As in the grave’s hold, I will crouch, and wait
The body’s death. Nay, nay—Thy words were
kind,

Were sweet blest words, I will not dumbly cower :
But pray and plead and wrestle for the hope
Of Heaven ; to be near Thee !

Bp. Sta.

Pangs worse than death

Break from my spirit ; clasp Heaven's hope ! 'tis
thine.

In God's own name I, Priest of God, affirm,
Thou at the last shalt win Heaven.

Blanch.

I believe :

Yea, though despairing, grapple with the hope.
And thou thyself in Heaven wilt welcome me ?
Wilt thou not ? There in Heaven, where never man
Or Fiend can bind, or sunder, evermore ?—
But here man's wrath, Fiends' wrath, has mas-
tery ;

It leaps on thee ! Escape them, baffle them !
What can I do, or plead ?—Turn even yet—
Oh I am mad—yea, all, I know, is vain—
I know thou wilt not turn [*snatches up her disguise*].

Farewell [*throws it on*] till death,
Till Heaven. Yet, once, now, 'neath the severing
stroke

I cannot quench the cry, Farewell, ' Beloved !'

[*She passes swiftly out ere the Bishop can stir or
speak.*]

Ep. Sta. She loves me—weird it seems—how
darkly weird

Is human love ! With all the strength of love
She strove to wreck my soul : no love but Thine,
Lord God, is scatheless [*kneels*]. Fold us in that
love ;

Compass with blessing all the souls of men ;

And past man's utmost thought of blessing bless
My Sister, all our dear ones ; and—Blanchfleur.

SCENE VI.

Exeter House in flames ; the mob plundering and shouting ; Bp. Sta. rides in with Wm. Waulle, John Padyngton, and a few others.

Bp. Sta. How now, are these your pastimes,
Citizens ?

Are these the rights ye claim ? Is this the wage
Wherewith ye pay good service ? [*to Wm. Waulle*]
Drive them off.

[*Wm. Waulle and the others scatter the mob and drive it back.*]

[*looking at the flames*] Much that I prized is here lost
past recall.

[*to Wm. Waulle after he had ridden back*]. We
looked for supper, Will ; there's fire enough !

But no meat ——

Wm. Waulle. John and I are ravenous ;
And both of us have eaten since your Lordship.

John Pad. Dear Master, you must be nigh faint.
The Mob [*gathering again and surging back*]. The
Queen !

Our Rights ! Queen !

Wm. Waulle.

Had those Kingston levies

not fled,

At rumours of the King's flight——

A Loyalist [galloping up to the Bp.]. Turn, my
Lord !—

The mob have rent John Marshall limb from limb.

Bp. Sta. No choice is left me ; if I reach the
Tower

London may be again won ; or at worst

The King's pursuers held in check.

Shouts of the Mob's Leaders.

Close up,

Form into ranks.

Bp. Sta.

Quick we must cleave a path——

[*Throwing up his hand*] Stop—look—a woman
caught within the crush !

Loyalist. The rabble thickens momentarily ; to pause
Is——

Bp. Sta. [sternly.] Silence—if we charge we
trample her :

See her affrighted strugglings.

Cries of the Mob.

Down with him !

London's Insulter ! Pest ! Yah ! Court of Eyre !

Away with him.

Bp. Sta. [watching eagerly]. She'll free herself.

Cries of the Mob and their Leaders. Queen !
Prince !

No Custos here ! No Coward's Deputy !

Death, Traitor, Traitor, death !

Bp. Sta.

She's through ; she's safe.

The blessing of the Blessèd be with us,

For life or death ! keep well together, Friends ;

Now full upon them, and at full speed ; charge !

[*They break through the mob, which pursues them with yells of rage.*]

SCENE VII.

A Room in an Inn at Reading, Joan Kaignes and her Son and Blanchfleur.

Joan Kaignes. We travel on through gloom, and
at the end

Comes pain of parting ; you have been to me

A solace, dearest ; but it seems so strange

This wish found harbourage in your heart ; strange
too

You won your Father's sanction for your wish :

For he will miss you sadly ; and I fear,

Though Polsloe's Nuns will give you loving wel-
come,

You scarce are fitted for the Convent life.

John Kaignes. No, you won't like it ; no, I'm sure
you won't.

And then they'll never let me see you there ;
And then you promised me, you know you did,
To be my Lady-love. [*Blanchfleur's eyes fill with tears.*]

Joan Kaignes. You're vexing Blanch.

John Kaignes. You're angry, Blanchy ?

Blanch. No, not angry, dear ;
But very sad.

John Kaignes. Don't, don't cry ; let me kiss you.

[*She kisses him. Enter Sir Richard Stapeldon.*]

Sir Rich. Sta. My men are all but ready to start
afresh ;

'Tis well we met, else, for they seemed to need it,
They would have had more rest ; your news cries,
' Mount,
Spur, flee to him.'

Joan Kaignes. Fear tears my soul.

Sir Rich. Sta. Remember
How last year's fear gave joy more joyousness.

Joan Kaignes. Our hearts' song then was, 'Walter
safe, safe home !'

And here, at home, ah God, he's girt with death.

John Kaignes. Mother, I wish we could have
stayed with him.

Blanch. [*kissing him passionately*]. You love !
My love !

Joan Kaignes [*to Sir Rich.*]. Say can he hold,
speak sooth,

His peril's post until you reach his side ?

Sir Richd. Sta. If any can.

Joan Kaignes. Dost recollect the lures,
Our Queen's, in France, the bribes wherewith she
strove

To make him hers ; the next Archbishoprick,
The Legateship, the Cardinal's red hat,
And, at the last, if England's influence
Fraught with the weight of France could compass
it,

(And France has single-handed set up Popes)
At last the threefold crown of crowns, to flash
On English brows once more : the strength, the
gifts

Of that Fourth Adrian all are his in full,
Yet without arrogance ! Richard, must he die ?

[*A chaunt suddenly rings forth.*]

When from out the Veil God's Will
Leaps in light, obey, fulfil ;

Leave to God the issues meet,

Life, death, triumph, or defeat ;

Death may save ; and Life may kill.

[*the chaunt dies away.*]

Joan Kaignes. It startled me ; are those words
ominous ?

Sir Richd. Sta. Of evil or of good ?—The monks
are passing ;

And they will march back ; be not startled then.

First there's a missive that must needs have wing,

Then wings for me [*prepares to write*].

Joan Kaignes [*to Blanch.*]. He'll make more speed
alone ;

Come, dear. [*To Sir Richd.*] haste, haste ! [*Exeunt
Joan Kaignes and her Son and Blanch. ; Sir
Richd. writes hastily. Enter Attendant.*]

Attendant. A rider, travel-spent,
And weak from recent illness, so we judge,
Sir Richard, craves immediate speech with you.

Sir Richd. Sta. From London ?

Attendant. Yes, Sir Richard.

Sir Richd. Sta. Bring him at once.

[*Exit Attendant and re-enters with de Lucie, who is ill
and almost broken down. Exit Attendant.*]

Geoffrey ! And worn and ill——

de Lucie [*in gasps*]. A little faint ;

A moment faint [*sinks into a seat*].

Sir Richd. Sta. They told me of your hurts ;
The journey's stress has overwrought your strength ;
Rest then awhile.

de Lucie [*starting*]. I must—if strength hold—
tell

My tidings.

Sir Richd. Sta. [*hastening for some wine and
handing it*]. Drink this ; if you then have
power,

Speak them.

[*He drinks, and though at first his voice comes feebly,*

it gradually grows strong from excitement of feeling.]

de Lucie. The King fled ;—all his Court—and all
His Council fled ;—except our Bishop :—He
Had been named London's Custos ;—and of right
He claimed the City keys ; the City's chiefs
Were chafed ; and wrought against him ; treasonous
scrolls
Were nailed up, even upon the Mayor's own doors ;
And spies swarmed, buzzed, and stung the people
mad.

And rumours darted that the royal troops
Had been o'ermastered, or had joined the Queen.
All day the streets had hummed ; at eve they
howled ;

I could not rest within ; [*Joan Kaignes enters without his knowing it, and hearing his words stands silent*] but crawled forth : westward

Heaven throbbed a-glare with more than sunset
light ;

And wild tongues screamed, 'The Bishop's house is
fired !'

Joan Kaignes. Oh !—Was He there ? [*de Lucie turns and sceing her, rises and salutes her sadly and is silent*]. Why do you close your lips ?

Speak, quick—

de Lucie. I know not ; but——[*Enter Blanch, with John Kaignes, but neither speaks.*]

Joan Kaignes.

Pause not.

de Lucie.

Ere long

Yells rose, and swelled, and swept near ; ‘ Down
with him,

Ere he can reach the Tower !’ and, close pursued,
The Bishop dashed past ; but his horse seemed
wounded :

Yet now he neared the North gate of St. Paul’s ;
Just at the spot a noted mendicant
Had made his lair ; a man with withered feet
But with a Giant’s strength of upper limbs ;
And then, I saw not how it was but saw
The cripple clinging to the horse’s legs,
Whilst fixed against the ground aslant his crutch,
With iron point upwards, gored the charger’s chest ;
And while it plunged and reeled, the Devil’s pack
Sprang on the Rider.

Joan Kaignes. Was there none, not one,
To help him ?

de Lucie. None—none there—I could not reach,
Or strike one blow for him : they tore him down,
They stamped and smote ; but, of their leaders,
two,
At Moordon’s prompting, rived the mass, and awed
The smiters.

Blanch. Moordon, I forgive thee all.

de Lucie. Then was he led, with Will and Padyng-
ton,

(For they too had been smitten to earth and seized)
In slow grim march t'ward Chepe; there came a
halt;

A horse-block shadowed by a tree stood near,
I clutched the trunk and clambered up, and looked,
While from the crush a voice cried, 'Leicester's
Earl

Bade harm him not.'

Joan Kaignes. God's love requite that man,
And Leicester's Earl.

de Lucie. But Moordon's hiss came, 'Leicester?
What's he to us? We serve the Queen; we know
Her will, her word!' and saying this he turned,
And spat upon the Bishop.

Blanch. Heaven's wrath-scourge
Tear Moordon body and soul.

de Lucie. Then as I looked
Poor Will, I saw, was fighting furiously,
Ah, hopelessly, for life; they stabbed and hacked
His soul out; and a sudden wild sword-sweep,
That all but slashed the nearest bystander,
Smote Padynton; and cleft his neck in twain:
The old man's eyes were on his master's face,
And so he knew not of the coming stroke,
Perchance scarce felt it. Ruffian hands meanwhile
Had wrenched the Bishop's armour off——

Joan Kaignes. Those troops,
There burrowing in the Tower, would they not stir?

de Lucie. They charged once, but reeled back.

Sir Richd. Sta.

Ah, recreants !

de Lucie. And round him whirled shrieks, 'Trampler of our rights,

Pest, Traitor ! Death ! The Queen, and Mortimer !

And Holy Church !' And with a herald's voice

Gournay cried, 'Hear ye, hear ! Our good Archbishop

Has cursed him ; he is Excommunicate !

Accurst ! Accurst !' I saw the Bishop shrink ;

A spasm of pain surged through him blent with
scorn :

And then, 'twas as a flash, his face was changed ;

He seemed no more to see the ring of foes,

He seemed to hear no more the cries for blood,

He seemed to hear far off a voice that blessed !

And he was Bishop Martyr wholly now :

Yea and methought an impulse came to him

To lift his hand in blessing or in prayer ;

But one arm clung tight-pinioned to his side,

And one I think was broken [*a cry from Blanch.*].

And the while

The rabble's yell grew more maniacal,

More brutelike still ; and human talons reached,

And gripped on him ; and snatched him downwards,
down

Below my vision : and at once upleapt

A broad axe-head, and caught a flake of light,

And flung it out, far ;—even as I knew

'Twould in a moment fling his spirit forth [*sinks into a seat*].

Joan Kaignes. Have mercy, Lord.

Blanch. Dread God, hast Thou no pity ?
[*The chaunt of the Monks rings out as they march back in procession.*]

Verse of Hymn.

When the Doomday's clarions peal,
When the life-flushed myriads kneel
Still as death before the throne ;
Then the Judge shall call His own,
And with glory crown the Leal !





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